

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method for improving utilization of satellite capacity of a satellite system that uses multiple uplink and downlink spot beams, comprising:

5 integrating an area-wide broadcast downlink beam to be used to support point-to-point transmissions of one or more of the multiple spot beams whose transmission capacity has been exhausted.

2. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

5 allocating a full primary spectrum of one polarization to uplink and downlink spot beams for point-to-point transmissions, and

10 allocating a full primary spectrum of a polarization opposite to the one polarization to the area-wide broadcast downlink beam for broadcast transmissions.

3. A method as recited in claim 2, further comprising:

assigning the full primary spectrum for broadcast transmissions in minimum-resolution broadcast bands.

4. A method as recited in claim 3, wherein the minimum-resolution broadcast bands are assigned to any and all uplink spot beams in any combination as configured by a network control center.

5 5. A method as recited in claim 4, wherein each one of the multiple uplink and downlink spot beams can access the full primary spectrum for broadcast transmissions in increments of one minimum-resolution broadcast band and can transmit on at least